CLAIMS

1. A note acceptor-dispenser validator for a note receiving machine comprising:

    a note validator having an opening for receiving notes and a validator head including means for sensing data relating to the authenticity, denomination, and type of note inserted into said validator and for generating signals corresponding to the sensed data for each received note;

    a validator processor for receiving and comparing said sensed data signals with stored data to validate the authenticity of said notes and for generating a signal signifying receipt and the value of said note to the note receiving machine;

    a note box configured to receive and hold notes received by said note acceptor-dispenser validator;

    a note hopper for receiving and storing pre-selected characteristic notes received by said note acceptor-dispenser validator; and

    a transportation unit for directing said notes determined to be authentic to one of said note box and said note hopper and for dispensing notes from said note hopper in response to a signal received by said note acceptor-dispenser validator from the note receiving machine.

2. The note acceptor-dispenser validator of Claim 1, further comprising:

    a controller for maintaining a running accounting of the number and denominations of the notes contained in each of said note hopper and said note box.

3. The note acceptor-dispenser validator of claim 1, further comprising:

    a controller for controlling the operation of the note acceptor-dispenser validator, said controller being capable of changing the characteristic used for directing notes to said note hopper.

4.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of claim 2 wherein said controller further comprises means for receiving instructions from a remote controller external to the note acceptor-dispenser validator and for reprogramming selected criteria concerning the minimum and maximum number of said pre-selected characteristics of said notes desired to be stored in said note hopper based on said received instructions.

5.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of claim 2 wherein said controller further comprises means for receiving instructions from a remote controller external to the note acceptor-dispenser validator and for reprogramming the selection criteria concerning the pre-selected characteristics of said notes desired to be stored in said note hopper based on said received instructions.

6.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of claim 1, further comprising:
        a controller for controlling the operation of the acceptor-dispenser validator, said controller having a secure means for reprogramming the selection criteria concerning the pre-selected notes desired to be stored in said note hopper.

7.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of claim 6, wherein said secure means for reprogramming prohibits said controller from changing the denomination of note to be stored in and dispensed by said note hopper whenever said note hopper is not empty.

8.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of Claim 1, wherein said note receiving machine further includes a coin hopper and a coin dispenser, said note receiving machine further comprising:

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means for calculating the number of notes to be dispensed from said note hopper and the number of coins to be dispensed from said coin hopper to provide a combination of notes and coins to total an amount to be dispensed as specified by said note receiving machine.

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9.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of Claim 1, further comprising:

means for sensing said notes dispensed by said transportation unit from said note hopper.

10   10.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of Claim 1, further comprising:

means for ejecting notes determined not to be authentic by said validator processor.

11.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of Claim 1, wherein said notes

15   dispensed from said note hopper are script.

12.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of Claim 1, further comprising:

a controller which is programmable to select the type and desired minimum and maximum number of notes to be stored in said note hopper and to store data

20   corresponding to the number of notes stored in said note hopper.

13.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of Claim 12, wherein said controller is programmable by a series of commands from a remote server.

25   14.   The note acceptor-dispenser validator of Claim 12, wherein said controller further comprises:

means for causing said transportation unit to transport a selected type of received note to said note hopper until a pre-selected maximum number of said selected characteristic received note to be stored in said note hopper has been met and then transporting all subsequently received notes to said note box.

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15. The note acceptor-dispenser validator of Claim 12, wherein said controller further comprises:

means for directing said transportation unit to transport all types of notes other than said pre-selected characteristic note to said note box.

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16. The gaming machine of Claim 1, further comprising:

a printer associated with said gaming machine to print one or more coupons which provide for at least a portion of a payout.

15 17. The gaming machine of Claim 1, further comprising:

a controller for limiting the amount of payout from said note box.

18. A gaming machine comprising:

a note validator having an opening for receiving notes and a validator head

20 including means for sensing data relating to the authenticity, denomination, and type of note inserted into said validator and for generating signals corresponding to the sensed data for each received note;

a validator processor for receiving and comparing said sensed data signals with stored data to validate the authenticity of said notes and for generating a

25 signal signifying receipt and the value of said note to the note receiving machine;

a note box configured to receive and hold notes received by said note acceptor-dispenser validator;

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a note hopper for receiving and storing a pre-selected denomination of notes received by said note acceptor-dispenser validator;

a transportation unit for directing said notes determined to be authentic to one of said note box and said note hopper and for dispensing notes from said note hopper in response to a signal received by said note acceptor-dispenser validator from the note receiving machine;

a dispenser; and

a controller for controlling the operation of the gaming machine and for directing said dispenser and said transportation unit to dispense a payout in response to a payout signal generated by said controller.

19.   The gaming machine of Claim 18, further comprising:

means for maintaining a running accounting of the number and denominations of the notes contained in each of said note hopper and said note box.

20.   The gaming machine of claim 18 wherein said controller further comprises means for receiving instructions from a remote controller external to said gaming machine for reprogramming selected criteria concerning the number of notes desired to be stored in said note hopper based on said received instructions.

21.   The gaming machine of claim 18 wherein said controller further comprises means for receiving instructions from a remote controller external to said gaming machine and for reprogramming selected criteria concerning the type of notes desired to be stored in said note hopper based on said received instructions.

22.   The gaming machine of Claim 18 further comprising:

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means for calculating the number of notes to be dispensed from said note hopper and the number of coins to be dispensed from said dispenser to provide a combination of notes and coins to total an amount to be dispensed as specified by said controller of said gaming machine.

23. The gaming machine of Claim 18, further comprising:

a transportation unit controller which is programmable to select the type and desired number of said notes to be stored in said note hopper and to store data corresponding to the number of notes stored in said note hopper.

24. The gaming machine of Claim 18, wherein said dispenser further comprises at least one of:

a printer associated with said gaming machine to print one or more coupons which provide for at least a portion of a payout; and

a coin hopper and coin dispenser.

25. A method of operating a gaming establishment having a plurality of gaming machines comprising:

installing a note validator in at least two of said gaming machines, said note validator having an opening for receiving notes, a validator head including means for sensing data and a validator processor for determining the authenticity, denomination, and type of note inserted into said validator and for generating signals corresponding to the sensed data for each received note and a transportation unit for transporting said notes through said note validator;

providing a note box configured to receive and hold notes received by said note validator in each of said at least two gaming machines having said validators;

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providing a note hopper for receiving and storing a pre-selected denomination of notes received by said note validator for each of said at least two gaming machines having said validators;

said transportation unit being configured to deliver notes from said note

5   validator to one of said note box and said note hopper and for dispensing notes from said note hopper;

providing a hopper and associated dispensing assembly in each of said at least two gaming machines;

providing a controller in each of said gaming machines for controlling the

10   operation of said gaming machines including directing said dispenser and said transportation unit to dispense a payout in response to a payout signal generated by said controller; and

providing a server capable of communicating with said controller of each of said at least two gaming machines, said server having a program for controlling the

15   selected type and quantity of notes to be directed to said note hoppers and available for dispensing from said gaming machine.